

identified.

Horticultural Procedure and Facilities

7. TMG recognises the urgent need for a nursery facility to sustain, through propagation and applied conservation research, the conservation of the both the toromiro and Easter Island's other unique resources including threatened indigenous species and cultivars.
8. TM will provide technical and horticultural expertise to support horticultural operations in Chile and Easter Island, for instance through training and the supply/exchange of scientific and horticultural protocols.
9. The toromiro cannot be regarded as secure in cultivation, collections are showing too high a turnover of specimens. Horticultural and propagation protocols to be developed, particularly focusing upon pest and disease management, transport of plants and in vitro techniques.
10. In advance of the results from genetic assessments, priority to be given to the collection of cuttings and herbarium specimens from all putative toromiro in cultivation in Chile.

Plants from Bonn and Gothenburg will be supplied to the Jardin Exotique, Menton, south of France, with the aim of establishing a trial plantation to assess the practicality of establishing an open air core collection within a Mediterranean garden.

Public Education

11. TMG will support, through the provision of taxonomic and conservation information, the proposed exhibition on the conservation of the toromiro. The display designed by the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris will be displayed in the Museum on Easter Island. Public education on Easter Island is recognised as of fundamental importance.

Sophora toromiro (Phillipi) Skottsbo., of Easter Island,
--are you growing this plant?

This survey, initiated by the botanical gardens of Bonn, Frankfurt, Göteborg and Kew, aims to ascertain the numbers of *Sophora toromiro* in cultivation. This species is extinct in the wild but still exists in cultivation. Its future depends upon a co-ordinated conservation strategy involving genetic analysis of existing plants, sound demographic and horticultural management, and eventual re-introduction to Easter Island. This project is being undertaken in collaboration with CONAF, Chile.

The genetic base for this species is believed to be very narrow; it is vital that wild origin plants are located and allowed to contribute to the tree's conservation. We aim to register, document and verify all existing specimens in cultivation.

Your participation is gratefully appreciated.

If you have the species within your collection, or you know of any specimen cultivated elsewhere (e.g. in a private garden) please include information below and contact:

Toromiro Management Group, % Conservation Unit, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; Richmond, Surrey TW93AB, United Kingdom.

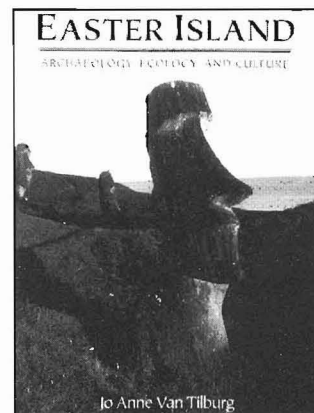
Please include name, address; source of plants (origin,

EASTER ISLAND Archaeology, Ecology, and Culture

Jo Anne Van Tilburg

Foreword by John Mack

"This book presents in an accessible and balanced way the results of more recent re-evaluation [of Easter Island prehistory]. And the realities that emerge are every bit as arresting as the 'mysteries' they succeed."—John Mack, Keeper of Ethnography, British Museum



Written after more than a dozen years of measuring, drawing, mapping, and photographing Easter Island's nearly one thousand known statues, this book takes a definitive step toward unraveling the mystery of Easter Island and its gigantic *moai*. Drawing on insights gained into sculptural techniques, design attributes, and formal variation, Jo Anne Van Tilburg examines Rapa Nui prehistory in the context of new understandings of ecology and culture. She confronts island myth and folklore with archaeological evidence, debunking the legendary conflict between the Long Ears and the Short Ears and examining the iconography and cosmology of the birdman cult. The latest methods of statistical analysis and computer imaging and robotics programs are brought to bear on the perplexing question of statue transport. 30 color, 67 b&w photographs, 60 line drawings 192 pp. Cloth: 1-56098-510-0H \$45.00

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The following Editorial Comment is by Dr. Frank Bock, San Miguel, California:

"Here we go again!"

This quotation, made so famous by former U.S. President Ronald Reagan, is equally applicable today, if the story from Santiago, Chile is indeed valid. It seems that the world will once again be treated to a 'Maritime Adventure' when Spanish explorer Kittin Muñoz sets sail with a crew of ten next October. Their quest: to navigate the seas of Oceania for a year in order to substantiate Thor Heyerdahl's nearly fifty-year old theory that Easter Island, and also Polynesia, were first settled by South Americans.

However, Muñoz will not follow in Heyerdahl's wake, but rather will launch from Rapa Nui itself, thus establishing in his own mind that his launching site had already been found by Peruvians, and that from here they pushed on to the rest of the Pacific.

This latest endeavor has the ring of myth that only

Europeans had the knowledge of ocean navigation, and that the lesser souls inhabiting the vast reaches of Asia, Africa, Indonesia, *et al.*, were quite inferior in their abilities to conquer the world's oceans. But in my musings, I wonder, why stop at Eurocentrism? Were they all that intelligent a millennia or so ago? How about Extraterrestrialcentrism? Cannot we give the wee folk in those UFOs some credit? Or, keeping it here on our own little globe, was von Daniken that far off base? After all he says, "I am convinced with a probability bordering on certainty that the earliest Polynesians could fly" (1973:133). Aha! Now there's a thought to contemplate, picturing Hotu Matua and his large entourage, flying across the Pacific, hovering over Rano Kau, neatly skirting the cliffs at Poike, and slowly settling down on Anakena beach.

Enough of this absurdity. Bahn and Flenley (1992:38-68) have written a short account and an excellent rebuttal of Heyerdahl's theory, and the question should remain closed. Why Muñoz is re-opening this closed book (for a reported two million dollars) boggles the mind. Historically and painstakingly, scientists from around the world have focused on Rapa Nui with compelling fascination. In order to find answers to the vexing question of Oceania settlement, they have centered on the islands themselves, studying the archaeological evidence, and weighing such diverse factors as Polynesian navigation and information gleaned from ethnographic sources. The compilation of data collected from hundreds of archaeological sites, meticulously dug and scrupulously documented by leading scholars have given the scientific community an excellent foundation upon which to base formulas for establishing who and how Polynesia was first populated.

But fiction and fantasy are far more attractive than pure reasoning. Research based on hypotheses, testing, and open to peer scrutiny, is not "the stuff that dreams are made on." Disneyland entertains more visitors than all the museums in the world combined, and the tabloid press feeds the frenzy for adventure against which no scientific journal can compete. Thus the world will always have its Spanish navigators, sailing against the tides of competent research and the public will continue to travel with them in their armchairs of complacency. The Kon Tiki con will have everlasting marks, bent on believing that the pea really is hidden under the center shell.

References

- Bahn, Paul and John Flenley. 1992. *Easter Island, Earth Island*, London, Thames and Hudson.
von Daniken, Erich. 1973. *Gold of the Gods*. New York, Bantam.

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1996 Tapati Festival is scheduled for January 28 to February 3. It's not too soon to sign up for the special Far Horizons Archaeological and Cultural Trip to Rapa Nui. This personalized tour includes everything you ever wanted to see on Easter Island—plus Tapati!

Contact Far Horizons at PO Box 91900, Albuquerque, NM 87199-1900 or call (800) 552-4575.